

Have you ever found yourself saying any of the following?

- My problem is my meth use. Alcohol (or marijuana) is not a problem for me.
- Having a beer or glass of wine is not really drinking.
- I drink only when I choose to. My drinking is not out of control.
- I don't really care about alcohol. I drink only to be sociable.

If you entered the program to stop using stimulants, you may have wondered why you were asked to sign an agreement stating your willingness also to stop using other substances, including alcohol. For many reasons, total abstinence is a necessary goal for people in recovery:

- Followup studies show that people who use stimulants are eight times more likely to relapse if they use alcohol and three times more likely to relapse if they use marijuana than people who do not use these substances. You can reduce your chances of relapsing greatly by maintaining total abstinence.
- Places and people associated with drinking often are the very places and people who are triggers for substance use.
- When you're learning to handle problems without taking stimulants, using another drug or alcohol to numb the uncomfortable learning process is harmful for two reasons. First, such use prevents you from directly confronting your stimulant use problem. Second, it puts you at risk of becoming dependent on alcohol or another substance while you try to overcome your dependence on stimulants.

Remember, if it's more difficult to stop drinking than you expected, maybe you are more dependent on alcohol than you think.